



SPIN VOLUNTEER QUICK GUIDE TO YOUTH AGES 12-14

While young people learn at their own rate and in their own way, they typically share some common characteristics during certain stages of development. It's important to consider those characteristics as you begin planning learning activities for your club.

Ages 12-14	
Characteristics of Age Group	Implications for SPIN Clubs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Grow in spurts. Typically, girls mature faster than boys. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Be sensitive to the fact that they may be uncomfortable with their changing bodies. Avoid drawing attention to the changes.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Are entering puberty and may begin to experience the emotional and physical effects of changing hormones. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Be prepared for the range of emotions and drama that the physical changes can bring. Listen and offer support as needed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Are self-conscious about their changing bodies which can lead to low self-esteem. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Be accepting of their feelings and insecurities; provide support and encouragement; pair them with supportive peers. Avoid comparisons or pointing individuals out in front of others.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Want to be liked by their friends; the opinions of their friends are more important than adults'. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide opportunities for them to work with friends in the group.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Desire a sense of independence; they explore and test their identities through clothing, new friends, music, and entertainment; but, they still want and need the help of adults. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Allow youth to experiment with the work they are doing. Provide suggestions, but allow them to make the final decision. That may mean helping them to learn from mistakes.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Want more responsibility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide opportunities that allow them to learn and develop responsible behavior.

Adapted with permission from University of Illinois Cooperative Extension

www.ext.vt.edu

*18 U.S.C. 707

Produced by Communications and Marketing, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Virginia Tech, 2016

Virginia Cooperative Extension programs and employment are open to all, regardless of age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, veteran status, or any other basis protected by law. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Virginia State University, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. Edwin J. Jones, Director, Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg; M. Ray McKinnie, Interim Administrator, 1890 Extension Program, Virginia State University, Petersburg.

VT/0916/4H-669NP